GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:175
ANSWERED ON:31.07.2003
IMPLEMENTATION OF DTH SERVICE
DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA;VINAY KUMAR SORAKE

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have finalized a proposal to implement the Direct-to-Home (DTH) TV access system in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether there is still confusion over the implementation of Conditional Access System in all four metro cities;

(d) if so, whether unlike the CAS, the DTH will eliminate the need for Cable Operators and bring in substantial savings to the viewers;

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(f) whether DTH was launched two years ago on KU-Band channel:

(g) if so, the details thereof alongwith the number of bidders who had secured licences and become operational; and

(h) the steps taken/likely to be taken by the Government for the implementation of DTH services in the country and the amount of fund invested/proposed to be invested for this purpose?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) to (h): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (h) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 175 DATE 31.7.2003

(a), (b), (f), (g) & (h): A decision was taken on 2nd November, 2000 to permit DTH services in India and detailed guidelines for obtaining licences were issued on 15.3.2001. These are available on Ministry`s website www.mib.nic.in.

The guidelines do not limit number of license holders and therefore no action for bids is envisaged. Four applications have been received in pursuance of these guidelines and these are under process. DTH is based on broadcasting via satellite and therefore, such projects are likely to provide coverage on All India basis.

The Planning Commission has recently given `in principle` approval for `free-to-air` Ku Band project of Prasar Bharati to be implemented in the Tenth Five Year Plan.

(c): No, Sir. After monitoring the preparedness of stakeholders to introduce addressability and after discussions with various stakeholders namely Broadcasters, Multi System Operators (MSOs), Cable Operators, Consumer Groups etc it has been decided to roll out the implementation of CAS, in a zone-wise manner in the metros of Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata and in the entire Chennai metropolitan area w.e.f. 1.9.2003. Notification has been issued on 10th July, 2003 and is available in Ministry`s website www.mib.nic.in The intervening period will be utilized to step up preparedness for smooth roll out of CAS and to educate the subscribers and increase their awareness.

(d) & (e): DTH and Cable Network are two different modes of delivery of content. CAS is a more cost effective mode of delivery while DTH provides premium service and is more effective in remote areas. World-wide experience has shown that both can co-exist and infact provide consumers a wider choice.